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SUBJECT: Croatia Requests for Embassy Science Fellows 2008

REF: STATE 28712

1. In response to reftel, post supports a request from the Government of Croatia to host Embassy Science Fellows. Post has received thirteen proposals. The Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport will provide housing and in-country transportation for any Embassy Science Fellow. Requesting institutions will provide office space and necessary equipment. English is the working language for all programs and no security clearance is required. Two proposals include specific persons requested from U.S. institutions. Embassy point of contact is Diana Matijas-Vengar: email: matijasdk@state.gov; phone 011 385 1 661 12244.

2. Following are 13 (A-M) Embassy Science Fellow 2008 proposals for Croatia:

A) Institution: University of Zagreb

Project: The University recently established a Research Office and Technology Transfer Office. The Research Office intends to develop resources in order to be able to help with international research grants, research contracts, intellectual property, ethical issues, research integrity and performance as well as professional development and information resources. The Technology Transfer office intends to provide patenting, licensing and all other commercialization support to facilities and researchers. The University requests an expert to help establish best practices for the Research office or Technology Transfer Office, or both. The University was founded in 1669 and is the oldest and largest university in South Eastern Europe.

Area of expertise: Patenting and licensing assistance for researchers. International grants applications.

Time frame: The preferred time for the Fellow would be May to July 2008, but they are flexible, with a stay of up to 3 months.
Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

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B) Institution: Faculty of Agriculture, Department of General Agronomy, University of Zagreb

Project: The overall interest is in emission of green house gasses

from agriculture with a focus on the study of the carbon cycle and soil respiration. The focus is on the fundamentals regarding global carbon cycling, climate changes, ecosystem productivity, crop production, and soil fertility. The project includes studying the different measurement methods of soil CO₂ efflux that are in use: auto-chambers, portable gas analyzers, etc. The study includes detailed research on biotic, chemical and physical processes of soil respiration.

Area of expertise: Teaching and transferring knowledge on the above topic to students and employers, with experience in CO₂ efflux measurement techniques.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit would be spring or autumn 2009, in order to ensure the possibility of field measurement work, for at least 2 months. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

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C) Institution: Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD)

The CERD is a research unit within the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb that carries out fundamental and applied research in education. It was founded in January 2001 by professors from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb (Departments of Pedagogy, Psychology, Sociology and Philosophy).

Project: The visiting expert would help organize a series of seminars for CERD researchers presenting US best practices in development and implementation of competence-based curricula. He/she is also expected to hold a series of interviews with CERD researchers on their previous experience in the field (esp. concerning the practice of national curriculum development in Croatia) and propose potential improvements. Assistance in developing research instruments for assessing awareness among stakeholders about curricular changes would also be of great benefit. In exchange the visiting expert can benefit from the CERD experience in Croatian curricular reform. The project should take a holistic approach to analyzing competences by looking at education for competences as part of a broader societal context (as an educational response not only to the particular needs of the individual, but also of society in general).

Area of expertise: Experience in qualitative methods in educational research.

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Time frame: The preferred time frame for the visit is September 2008 to June 2009 for at least 30 days. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Point of Contact:
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D) Institution: University Hospital for Infectious Diseases "Dr. Fran Mihaljevic" Scientific Unit, Zagreb

The University Hospital for Infectious Diseases (UHID), Zagreb, Croatia, was founded in the spring of 1893 as the City Hospital for Contagious Diseases. Today UHID is the leading University Hospital for Infectious Diseases in Croatia as well as this region of Europe. The Hospital's important focus on national and regional infectious diseases is reflected in its many reference centers: Center for AIDS; Center for Urogenital and Sexually Transmitted Diseases; Center for Travelers' Diseases; Center for the Control of Antimicrobial Resistance; Center for the Diagnoses and Treatment of Infectious Diseases; Center for Viral Hepatitis; and the recently established Center for Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases.

Project: The Fellow would train Croatian scientists in U.S. funding application preparation, submission, and funded research program management, as well as training Croatian scientists in intellectual property issues and patenting. Help with grant/contract application issues such as identifying funding sources, meeting the requirements of the funding agency, developing mutually beneficial national and international collaborations, understanding the peer review process, and the preparation of competitive applications. Help with research management issues such as financial policies, regulatory agency requirements, interactions with funding agency officials, intellectual property and tech transfer interests, human and animal research subject policy, etc. In light of recent attention to emerging and re-emerging diseases (HIV/AIDS, drug-resistant TB, MRSA, Avian influenza, SARS, arthropod-transmitted infections etc.), bioterrorism threats (anthrax), and rapid global travel, infectious diseases are a critical component of global health research and policy development.

Area of expertise: In discussions with NIH/NIAID representatives, the Hospital requests and proposes:

Dr Peter R. Jackson, PhD, Chief, AIDS Clinical and Epidemiology Research Review Branch (PJackson@mail.nih.gov)

Time frame: The preferred time frame for the visit is September - December 2008 for at least 2 full months. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:

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E) Institution: Institute of Veterinary Economy and Analytical Epidemiology, Veterinary Faculty, University of Zagreb

Project: To help perfect Veterinary epidemiology studies by applying simulation models and risk analysis. The Fellow would teach application of simulation models to be used at the Institute, focusing on applications used by the USDA Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health. The Fellow would also apply simulation programs to models of spreading swine flu in Croatia and the study thereof. The Fellow would teach Institute representatives prevention strategies and models for eradication, as well as risk analysis important for decision making that would lead to protection of both human and animal health.

Area of expertise: The Institute requests a specialist in the above mentioned field from the USDA Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is May - July 2008 for at least one month. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:
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F) Institution: Large Carnivores Research Project, Biology Department, Veterinary Faculty, University of Zagreb

Project: Researchers of "Large Carnivores Research Project" at the Biology Department of the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Zagreb have studied various aspects of the biology of bears, wolves and lynx in Croatia for the past 26 years. Scientific data on large carnivores' distribution, home ranges, densities, activity, habitat use, diseases and mortality were implemented in management and conservation of those animals in Croatia. As of 2008, they have extended their research efforts to deer populations living in the range of large carnivores, to determine basic biological parameters of prey bases for large carnivores. They would like for the Fellow to help improve efforts in studying deer ecology including survival, mortality factors, reproduction, movements, dispersal, population dynamics, genetics, and relationships with large carnivores.

Area of expertise: The Veterinary Faculty requests/proposes Mr. Michael E. Nelson of the Minnesota Office of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) based on his expertise in the above-mentioned fields.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is the summer or fall of 2008, depending on his availability, for at least one month.
Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:
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G) Institution: Department of General Agronomy, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb

Project: Assistance sought on ground-based remote sensing in agriculture. The Fellow would help with remote sensing technologies in agriculture concerning comprehensive analysis of crop vegetation under different types of stress caused by surplus or lack of fertilization and water, and also spatial analysis of weed or disease distribution within crop canopy, especially for modelling nitrogen dynamics in plant and soil under different nitrogen fertilization treatments and agro-ecological conditions by ground-based remote sensing (field spectroscopy). Would like for the Fellow to give a general overview on precision farming techniques - sampling methods, spatial data analysis and interpretation, remote sensing technology in agriculture - airborne and satellite image data analysis and field spectroscopy with a focus on soil and vegetation spectral analysis for monitoring dynamics of nutrients and water balance, and correlation of satellite image data analysis with ground truth spectral data obtained by spectroradiometer.

Area of expertise: The Fellow should have experience in ground-based remote sensing measurement techniques (field spectroscopy, spectral data processing, prediction models based on multiple linear regression).

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is fall 2008 for at least 2 months. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:
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H) Institution: Soil Science Department, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb

Project: The Fellow would help with soil classification and soil taxonomy. The matter of interest is Soil Science, more precisely the correlation of national soil classifications. In order to understand soil taxonomy better, the Soil Science Department would like to achieve correlation of Croatian soil classification with soil taxonomy. The correlation would be done using examples of dominant soil types in Croatia. The Fellow would offer expertise in this field.

Area of expertise: Experience in soil classification according to WRB and soil taxonomy.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is during 2009 for at least one month. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:
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I) Institution: Institute for Adriatic Crops and Karst Reclamation, Split

The Institute for Adriatic Crops (IAC) is a public research Institute under the auspices of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport (MSES) of the Republic of Croatia. It is located in Split, on the Adriatic coast, in the area where typical Mediterranean crops are grown. Split is also Croatia's second largest city.

Project: In order to promote continuity based on the foundation built in 2007, an embassy Fellow is requested to continue strategic planning and implementation for grants and proposals in agricultural research, education and extension. Relationships established with some U.S institutions will be extended for collaboration in international education through distance learning, research collaboration, and sharing of extension methods.

Area of expertise: A scientist with experience in research, education and extension programs in the field of Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology could provide necessary knowledge and would help us develop and improve our activities. A person with a sound scientific background, familiar with horticulture, and with good knowledge of its international industry sector, would best fit in

the program.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is sometime between May and July 2008 or from middle of August to the end of September 2008, for at least 45 days. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:

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J) Institution: Department of Agricultural Botany, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb

Project: The project would focus on plant ecology and the dynamics of vegetation by remote sensing techniques with a special interest in succession of pastures. The department also requests help in vegetation spectral analysis for monitoring the dynamics of vegetation and the correlation with satellite image data analysis with ground truth spectral data.

Area of expertise: Experience in ground based remote sensing measurement techniques (field spectroscopy, spectral data processing).

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is during 2008 or 2009 for at least two months. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:

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K) Institution: Department of Pomology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zagreb

Project: With regard to selected wild fruits, the Department expects to work on developing inventories and insight into the existing condition of populations, analysis of genetic diversity within and between populations, determination of antioxidant content in selected populations, isolation of plants rich in nutrients, isolation of plants resistant to the most important diseases and pests, propagation of interesting material and growing an ex situ collection, protection of interesting material in ex situ collection, and availability of material for propagation.

Sampling of selected wild edible fruits and data input into FCD. Preparation for locating the collection field will be done. The results of botanical, pomological, genetic and chemical analyses for determined localities will be obtained. Accessions for propagation and planting into collection will be selected. Propagated material will be planted in the collection field. The results of botanical, pomological, genetic and chemical analyses for the determined localities will be obtained. Data will be analyzed and considered for preparation of papers for scientific journals or science conferences.

Area of expertise: Fellow would be a scientist from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Fellow should have experience in establishing gene banks and knowledge about plant

diversity.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is May and July 2009 for at least 2 months. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:

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L) Institution: Faculty of Geotechnical Engineering University of Zagreb

The Faculty of Geotechnical Engineering was one of the first higher education institutions in Croatia to initiate education of students in Environmental Engineering. The Faculty has recently completed their Environmental Geochemistry Laboratory, with special facilities for water analyses.

Project: The Faculty wishes to host an expert in environmental protection and the role of various disciplines in protecting the environment. The Faculty would like to improve the quality of the university education program by updating their curriculum and establishing Environmental Engineering as a respectable engineering and scientific discipline. According to the Faculty, the importance of Environmental Engineering has not yet been adequately recognized in Croatia. The Fellow would be welcome to give lectures on the importance of Environmental Engineering for academics as well as for general audience and experts in public administration of the Republic of Croatia.

Area of expertise: An expert with a sound knowledge of environmental protection. The Fellow should be acquainted with education programs for environmental engineers.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is during the winter semester of the 2008-2009 academic year for at least one month. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a work station for the Fellow.

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M) Institution: Department of Parasitology and Parasitic Diseases, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb

Project: The Department seeks a Fellow who could help with Trichinella, Croatia's most widespread food borne parasitic pathogen. In Croatia, the PCR method is used to detect intra and interspecific variability. Aside from multiplex PCR, amplification of ITS1 and ITS2 fragments followed by RFLP analysis is also used for the recognition of various Trichinella. The Fellow would help establish sophisticated molecular techniques appropriate to carry on molecular epidemiological investigation, which would be useful in searching for the source and the risk of trichinellosis spread in Croatia. Better knowledge of appropriate molecular methods would help in clarifying the current occurrence of non encapsulated Trichinella pseudospiralis in Croatia.

Area of expertise: The Department requests a Fellow from the Animal Parasitic Diseases Laboratory, Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture, BARC EAST, Beltsville, Maryland.

Time frame: The preferred time for the visit is during 2009 for up to 3 months. Language: English. Security Clearance: None

Housing/office space: The Ministry of Science, Education and Sport has agreed to cover the costs of in-country housing and transportation. The institution will provide office space and a workstation for the Fellow.

Point of Contact:

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